

OUTREACH PROJECTS  
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# Work ethic 'curse to those with dull jobs, and the unemployed'

WATERLOO, Ont. (CP) — As far as John Farina is concerned, the old work ethic — work hard and reap the benefits — is more a curse than a blessing.

Farina, a Wilfrid Laurier University professor of social work, says leisure is a curse to those who go to dull, mundane jobs "and turn out widgets 365 days a year."

And it's a curse to the unemployed who, he says, are made to feel like "inanimate lumps, beset with guilt, inhibitions, compulsions, phobias and general feelings of inadequacy."

Farina's way of looking at work comes in part from putting it into its historical context.

"The work ethic was created by 16th-century theologian John Calvin

and it's been the bane of our society ever since.

"It is sort of a bastard child of the unholy union between the Industrial Revolution and the Protestant Reformation.

"Before that, in the Middle Ages, people had something like 169 holidays a year. There was a Saint-this and a Saint-that and a feast-this and a feast-that.

"Calvin said work was the work of God, that a man of wealth had obviously been rewarded by God.

"But as I look at the very beginnings of Christianity, there was the Garden of Eden. No one worked there. It wasn't until man sinned that he was kicked out of the garden and put to work."

Farina says people do

not value work as much as they value the security of an income.

Take, for example, the case of the working man who gets up every morning, grabs his lunchpail and heads out to his job as an engineer on a

locomotive where he spends his day riding around the countryside. This man, Farina says, is respected by his neighbors.

On the other hand,

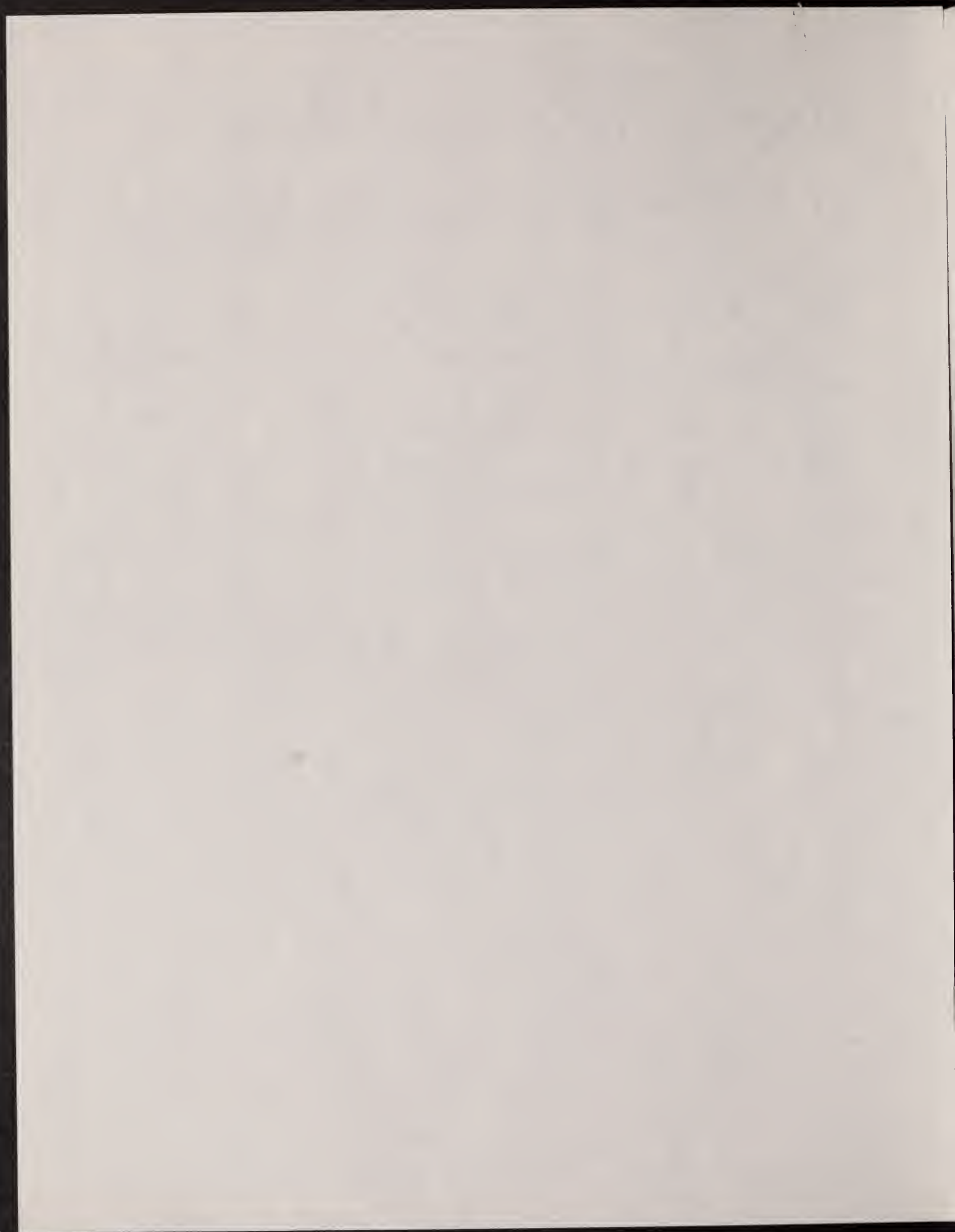
there's the welfare mother living on the same street. She gets up at 6 a.m., tends to her kids, feeds them, gets those who attend school ready to go. Then she does the dishes,

washes the clothes, dusts, cleans, and keeps her other children occupied. Then prepares lunch before going shopping on a meagre budget.

"Here's this woman

and she works like a dog all day," Farina says, but society doesn't see her as having a job so she's not as respected as the man on the locomotive.

If Farina had his way, he would abandon the work ethic altogether, create a world of leisure where most people don't work, and give everyone guaranteed annual incomes.





## Pete Brewster



It's difficult to solve all the world's economic woes in a space just two columns wide by 12 inches.

But I've been attempting to take a peek at that Herculean task in my last two columns.

Before leaving such esoteric musings for the mundane realities of real-life situations, I would like to touch briefly on the future of market economics — which I've suggested is simply one way of looking at the world, not necessarily the right way and certainly not the only way.

I think the market will be with us for many, many years yet. But we need to redefine and improve on how we use it.

We can, if you like, look on the market as a technological invention — a system developed by man to help him better organize output and distribution of services, goods and wealth within society.

It grew up and was in place before Adam Smith tried to explain it. Since then, a dozen generations of economists have attempted to develop theories on how it works, why it works and how we should modify it.

Market economics has become a secular religion — if such a contradiction in terms can exist.

Within that hazy framework, I think it is necessary to acknowledge that market economics has resulted in a number of major advances in the industrialized world.

At the same time, the unregulated market is a harsh taskmaster.

The unregulated market, of course, is an economist's myth, never a state of the real world.

There has never been a society which hasn't actively sought to protect from or expose to the market special interest groups and individuals.

At one time, we didn't see things in this light. We viewed the economy as being an integral part of society, not the dominant or driving force as we envisage it today.

Each nation or group of nations had its own special interests and tried to promote and protect them. Distribution of wealth and power was along heredity and military lines or through religious organizations. The guilds and merchant groups

were a minor segment of society.

The merchants began to gain importance when nations started using them to extract wealth.

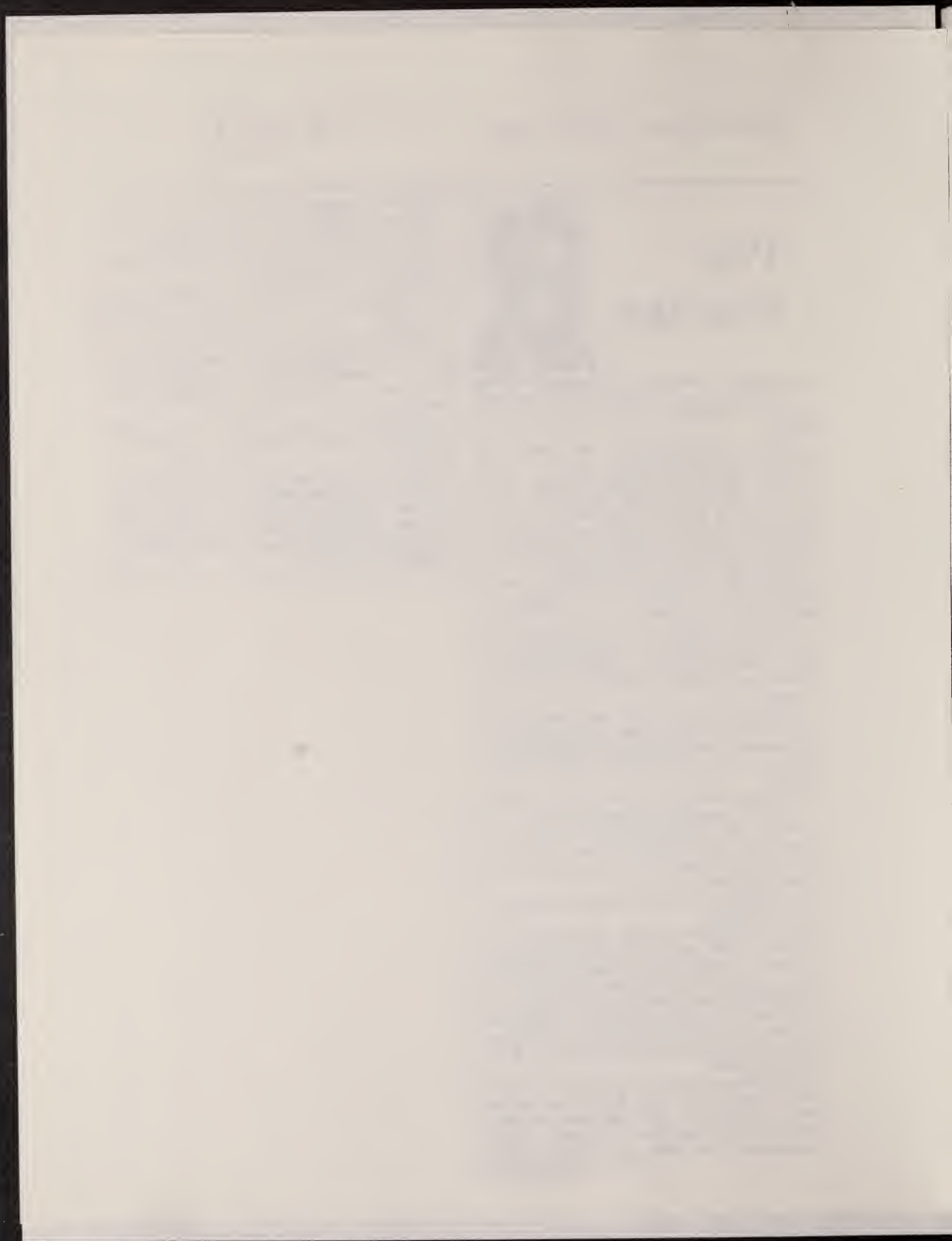
At one time, we interpreted such moves in terms of social goals and aspirations.

Today we do it in terms of the world economy as interpreted by the high priests of market economics.

That's why we have international, multinational and bilateral trade agreements, covering customs and excise duties and a host of other impediments to the flow of goods, services and money between countries.

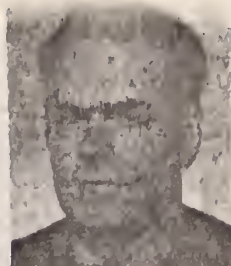
That's why we have internal laws against monopoly — ineffective and badly written as they may be.

The market does nothing to insure equality or equity. It tends to concentrate wealth and power in a few hands, so we've endeavored to rectify that by instituting complex tax laws — which we subvert because market incentives can't drive the economy if we wipe them all out.





## Pete Brewster



A few weeks ago, I made a passing reference to technocracy as a politically "crackpot" idea which was bounced around in the 1920s and '30s as an alternative to our market society.

Those comments drew letters to the editor from individuals who are trying to keep technocracy alive as an educational program for "social and economic reconstruction" when the present order collapses.

Technocracy was developed by engineers and scientists based on the unorthodox views of U.S. economist Thorstein Veblen, who died in 1929.

Veblen rejected market economics. In his view, the economy runs through social institutions. The improved standard of living which has occurred worldwide over the past several centuries has been due to institutionalized technological and scientific advances, not to the acumen of businessmen.

He argued that the "Captains of Industry" are, in fact, a drain on the economy and serve only to impede or even sabotage the social welfare.

He argued against vested interest, private property rights beyond the individual's home and personal effects, and suggested lasting peace will not be possible so long as we operate under a price system. Obviously, a pretty scary guy!

Technocracy proposed a North American industrial technate, freeing us from unnecessary work. Political freedom would be left to society to work out — hence a "crackpot" approach.

Now, Veblen was not alone in his view of market society. His contemporary, economic historian R.H. Tawney, and later Karl Polanyi showed that markets were never a significant part of economic life until about 400 years ago, when they increasingly began to dominate trade and especially the changing technologies, which brought about the industrial revolution.

Canadian-born John Kenneth Galbraith is the best known of the latter-day institutional economists.

He is a pariah among recognized (i.e. market) economists. They feel he doesn't understand the intricacies of how market economies work.

As for technocracy, it is viewed by most observers as a form of bureaucracy. As leading right-wing political philosopher Mario Pei put it:

"Long before Parkinson's Laws were formulated, we knew that a bureau's work can be expanded to meet any and all appropriations."

In "The America We Lost," Pei went on:

"We are all angry at bureaucratic stupidity coupled with bureaucratic arrogance, angry at the know-it-all attitude of cocksure experts who want to do things to us 'for our own good,' angry at the hypocrisy of office-seekers who barter principles for votes."

How true those words ring when one thinks of the present federal regime in Ottawa and the manner in which the national energy program was introduced!

Yet today we face the same problems in our society as stated by John Maynard Keynes in "The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money":

"The outstanding faults of the economic society in which we live are its failure to provide for full employment and its arbitrary and inequitable distribution of wealth and incomes."

Keynesian solutions adopted after the Second World War failed to solve those problems. We again find ourselves in a situation not unlike that Great Depression which sparked Keynes's writings.

Well, as promised Friday, I've offered nothing to solve our immediate economic problems. Like Pei, I believe our most pressing concern is political freedom, something few economists since Karl Marx have addressed with any real conviction.

Dr. Verne Atrill of Toronto is one of the few in his latest book "The Freedom Manifesto."

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There is a growing concern in society because our economic system is not working the way we would like.

We have had several years now of high inflation, high unemployment and, in the view of many, the prospects for improvement seem dim.

## Pete Brewster



The concern is so great, in fact, that one-time boomtown Calgary has just launched a six-week campaign to promote positive thinking in the city.

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce thinks their "Yes We Can" campaign will convince Calgarians that their actions can make a difference in revitalizing the economy.

Around the world, there are learned arguments among economists and others about the causes of our economic problems.

There are numerous contrary or downright conflicting solutions proposed.

The net effect in Canada is a growing conviction among the population that economists, businessmen and politicians don't know what they are talking about.

One difficulty is that most of us who debate this murky subject are talking about the operation of a market economy.

Formal economic training deals with little else, so few modern economists are equipped to deal with any other view of economic reality. The assumption is that without markets an advanced economy and hence an advanced society cannot exist.

Businessmen are dealing with the day-to-day realities of market operations; and politicians, largely drawn from the legal fraternity, take their cues from whichever direction promises the most votes.

Most of the so-called developed world has been converted to this view of economics and our societies are, in varying degrees, market societies.

Our political beliefs have tended to roughly parallel our views on market regulation, with the so-called leftists being committed to full market regulation and the so-called rightwingers being committed to free markets.

Political freedom is equated with economic freedom in the "free"

world; communists would argue they have been freed from the manipulations of capitalists by state planning.

Most of us fall somewhere in the middle in both arenas.

On a statistical distribution curve, North Americans would be shifted sharply right; the Soviet Union sharply left and the rest of the market-oriented world somewhere in between.

Now, I don't want to get into the quagmire of arguing "isms." Capitalism versus Communism requires assuming the common ground on which both philosophical views are based.

I'd like to suggest there are other approaches we can take which might prove more constructive.

Economics is derived from the Greek word for household, and in earlier times referred to the best or appropriate means of ordering one's family affairs.

It was later extended to cover the affairs of the city, the city-state and eventually to nations and their interactions.

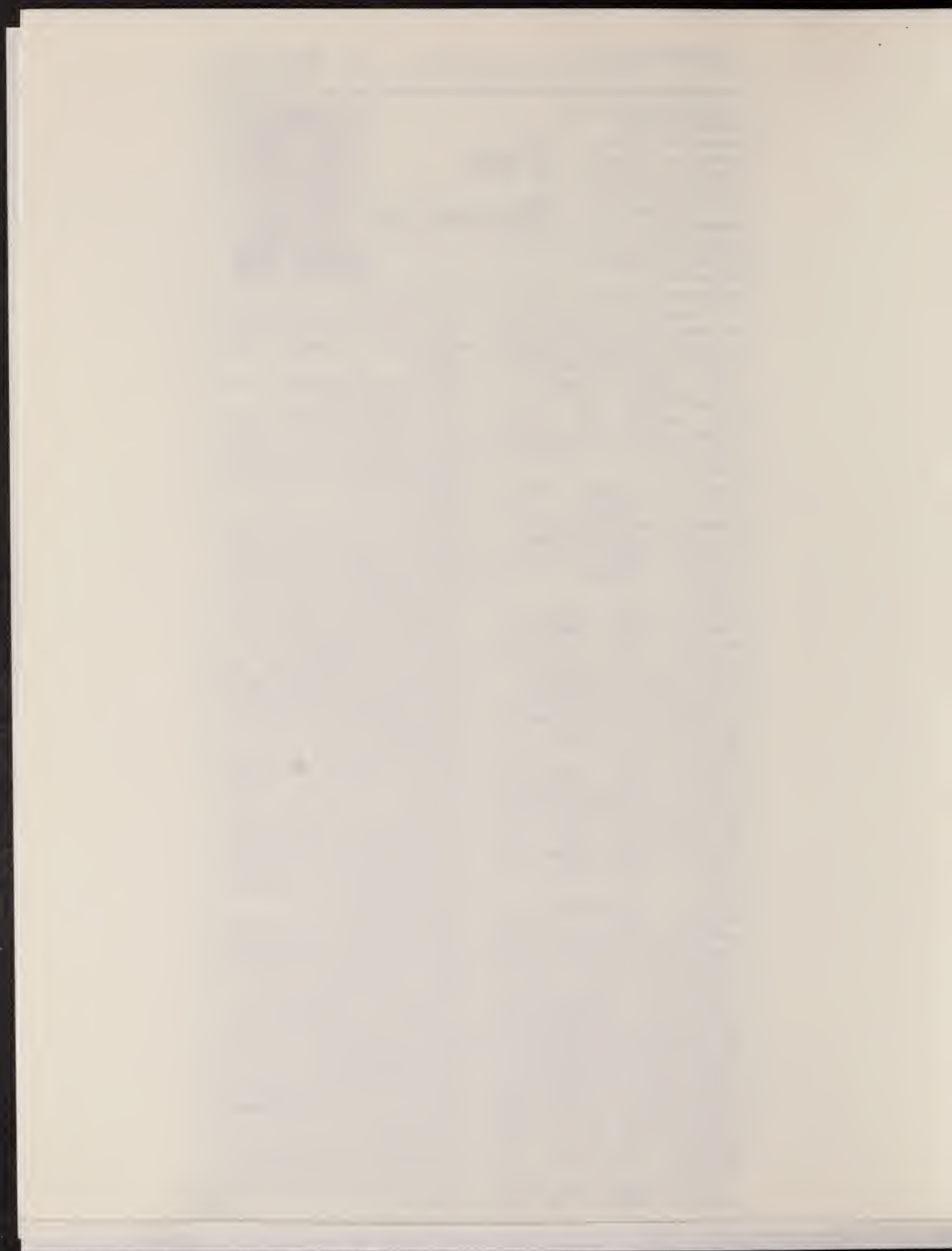
Ecology and environment derive from the same root word, and over the years there have been many attempts to rationalize our economic views with our views on ecology and the environment.

This naturalistic approach suggests our economic views must be in harmony with our environmental views if both are to reflect an accurate picture of reality.

I believe that is true, but we are a long way from understanding our economic difficulties, let alone resolving them in a way that is environmentally benign.

The latest gas well blowout near Lodgepole is a modest but pungent case in point.

In my Sunday column, I'll raise some alternative views which won't solve immediate problems, but might help us see them from a new perspective.





# Offering a sense of balance

For Pete's sake, give us a break! I'm referring to Pete Brewster's column of November 7.

He speaks of Technocracy in the past tense. Then he lays it on us that we are "political crackpots trying to subvert the North American way of life."

Well, here we are, alive and well, and living in store-front office space in the HUB, at the university, as well as in a lot of other places scattered over the continent.

Yes, our roots do go back to the '20s and '30s. Yes, we do propose operating our industrial society on the basis of "energy units" rather than money. Yes, we do propose a four-hour work day to balance the work to be done with the work force available.

But no, we are not "political crackpots" — we are a non-political organization. No, we are not trying to "do away" with the price system — it is collapsing of its own limitations in our supercharged high-energy society.

Technocracy's analysis of our economic troubles is as valid now as it was in the '20s and '30s, and is being validated by current events. And Technocracy's blueprint for a high-technology economy of abundance, free of politics and price, is still "the only program of social and economic reconstruction which (is) in complete intellectual and technical accord with our age."



(The Encyclopedia Americana, Canadian Edition, 1955).

So give us a break! Let your readers hear what Technocracy has to say.

Walt Fryers  
Edmonton

## Technocracy

It is refreshing to note that Professor John Farina and other social scientists in Eastern Canada have recognized that technological development is reducing drastically the requirement of human labor and is posing the challenges of both income distribution and coping with increased leisure time.

It is heartening to note that Pete Brewster (Nov. 7) recognizes this phenomenon and draws relevant quotations from philosophers and

refers to the pronouncements of Technocracy.

Mr. Brewster states that Technocracy has not developed a political philosophy consistent with their industrial concepts. True, Technocracy is neither political nor is it a philosophy. The Technocrats realized a half century ago that our economic or price system was increasingly incapable of distributing the abundance of goods and services produced with ever increasing automation and would face increasing disintegration. In turn, they designed a social system for direct distribution to consumers using energy units as a means of measurement. And Technocrats were never trying to subvert the North American way of life but as a research and educational organization have been offering a realistic approach to today's social dilemma.

J. Gregory  
Edmonton

EDMONTON JOURNAL 16 NOV 82



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TECHNOCRACY  
INC.

18 Nov 82

CHQ

1. 1st Nov 82: Article in Edmonton Journal titled: "Unemployment seen as Success", datelined Toronto (CP) quoting Prof. John Farina and others to effect that unemployment should be welcomed as an opportunity for leisure.

7 Nov. 82: Column by Pete Brewster in Edmonton Journal discussing the above article and recalling the proposals of Technocracy in the 1920s and '30s. (Pete is a longtime acquaintance with John Gregory and not-so-long with me. He is well aware of our existence and our 'pitch'. Gregory and I both thought he was handing us an 'opening', which we promptly took.)

16 Nov 82: Two letters to the editor printed in the Edmonton Journal - one from myself, and one from John Gregory, responding to the Brewster item.

13 Nov 82: An article on editorial page by Editor of the Journal, Stephen Hume, titled: "Economic disorder may herald new age". This and other items suggest an improving receptivity for our inputs may now be developing.

Walt Fryers, Treasurer.

Address: 11353 A, Technocracy Inc., 9203.S 112th St., Edmonton, Alta. T6G 2C5

No statement of policy shall be binding upon the organization unless issued from Continental Headquarters of Technocracy Inc.



July 11  
1881

Dear Sir,  
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above matter. I am sorry that I cannot give you a more definite answer at this time, but I am unable to do so until I have had a chance to consult with the proper authorities. I will endeavor to give you a final answer as soon as possible.

Yours truly,  
J. H. [Name]



# Economic disorder may herald new age

I'm not comfortable with the abstractions of economists. They lend an air of precision and certainty to what is clearly a game of informed guesses about the most profound uncertainties.

Instead, I've always preferred to picture the economic order in geological terms.

The surface of the earth seems unchanging. Our brief lives come and go while the Rockies rise another inch, or British Columbia creeps another foot westward into the Pacific Ocean.

Glimpses of these geological evolutions enable us to create intellectual constructs of the world that was and will be.

Yet it's almost impossible in any visceral sense to imagine Alberta as the bottom of a brackish inland sea, or the Rockies as a sedimentary plain.

Like the planet's tectonic plates, the structures of our social and economic continents are adrift on the surface of huge, imperceptible forces.

Sometimes we are treated to spectacular and personalized evidence of their existence — wars, depressions, great inflations, revolutions, the collapse of entire civilizations.

But often these events, like the volcanic eruptions of the Pacific Rim, where the great plates grind against one another, are only localized manifestations of a process of unimaginable power.

I've been wondering, watching the progress of this worst recession in half a century, whether we aren't getting a brief, dramatic glimpse of forces at work changing the underpinnings of our economic order.

We love to divide the past into digestible chunks. The Stone Age, The Bronze Age, and so on.

But the past, of course, is much messier than our passion for classification permits us to believe.

"The Sixties," with their evocation of student radicalism, Flower Power, Acid Rock and the rest of it, really began in the mid-Sixties and ended in



Stephen  
Hume

the mid-Seventies with the end of the Vietnam War.

Are we witnessing the messy demise of the familiar? The "hardware" world of The Industrial Revolution blurring into a new "software" society powered by electronic manipulation of information rather than assembly lines.

These sorts of things don't change neatly.

The peasants of medieval Europe didn't go to bed as serfs one night and wake as Renaissance craftsmen the next morning. The transition from self-sustaining feudal societies to the interdependence of urban mercantilism was brutal.

How many of the troubles besetting the western world's government, business and labor organizations today are symptoms of fundamental changes in the nature of our economic structures?

Are these disruptions the movement of heavy manufacturing industries to the developing world, where jobs are desperately needed, less costly labor is abundant, and new, more efficient technologies can be employed from start-up?

It's worth considering the chronic problem areas of labor, productivity, and marketing in North American and European economies.

There are exceptions, of course, but almost

always the trouble stands out in those aging industries which once symbolized the pinnacle of industrial development and mass production.

Steel, textiles and garments, ship-building, auto manufacturing — all these industries were once the muscle and sinew of the west's economic strength. Today they are in decay.

Conversely, are these heavy industries being eclipsed by a new economic order — one in which high technology, services, and information processing will reign?

Note that one of the hottest fields in business these days mimics the hottest growth areas in technology.

Consulting firms spread like crabgrass. They will assist in setting up management, computer systems, marketing strategies, financial portfolios, public relations. You name it, they've got it.

They call themselves corporate troubleshooters, market analysts, freelance writers, systems analysts.

But all share the same characteristics. Flexibility and portability. They are components. They come with their portable micro-computers, plug into a structure, serve a specialized need, then unplug and move on.

In this they mimic the computer applications they use. It's the software, the specialized program, that permits the computer to do what needs to be done.

I seem them, and the economic symptoms cast into high relief by this recession, as the harbingers of a new world.

And I'm certain of only one thing about that world — whatever it's like will be something we never imagined.

*Future Shock* Alvin Toffler called it. It seems the future is arriving a little sooner than we thought.

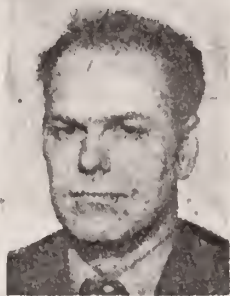
Doesn't it always?

13 NOV 83





## Pete Brewster



A group of specialists meeting in Toronto last week agreed that high unemployment is here to stay and we'd better begin learning how to live with it.

"Man invented machines so man would not have to work and we've succeeded to the point of one and a half million unemployed," said John Farina, a professor in the faculty of social work at Wilfrid Laurier University.

"But instead of cheering about it, we're in despair. To me that is sheer, raging idiocy."

The other members of the group were quoted in the same vein, all of them urging us to get ready for a life of idleness and to ease off on the work ethic.

Well, Ron Collister has already taken them to task. He likes work and thinks the suggestion is a crackpot idea. In private conversations, several others around the Journal were less unkind and a few even enthusiastic.

However, the concept is not really new. Plato's philosopher kings were just one example of an approach taken to leisure by the early Greeks.

The Romans, too, viewed leisure in a much different light than we do today. It was seen as a necessary prerequisite for the development of new ideas and cultivation of the good life.

However, leisure of this nature was something that couldn't be granted the masses and that's in conflict with egalitarian ideas.

Down through the centuries since then, we've continued to have difficulty with the concept of leisure and how to relate it to a workaday world.

In fact, modern Western man tends to think it's downright sinful. As Joseph Piper said in "Leisure, The Basis of Culture:"

"The inmost significance of the exaggerated value which is set upon hard work appears to be this: man seems to mistrust everything that is effortless; he can only enjoy, with a good conscience, what he has acquired with toil and trouble; he refuses to have anything as a gift."

Piper contends that free time is not the same as leisure, which he defines as a state of mind, a willingness to let things happen.

In this, he is in agreement with Sebastian de Grazia, the author of "Of Time, Work and Leisure." He says:

"Free time is a realizable idea of democracy. Leisure is not fully realizable, and hence an ideal not alone an idea. Free time refers to a special way of calculating a special kind of time. Leisure refers to a state of being, a condition of man, which few desire and fewer achieve."

Now, de Grazia was writing back in 1962; Piper was first published in 1952.

De Grazia debunked the "modern myth" that in the past century the machine has freed man from work. In fact, he argues, we have merely packaged our free time around the clock, in a convenient arrangement for industrial society.

Rather than working less, people are probably working more, having been sold on the idea that they need to make more money in order to buy all those time saving gadgets.

Back in the 1920s and '30s, proponents of technocracy were arguing that by properly arranging our industrial society on the basis of "energy units" rather than money, we could do away with the price system, giving us "time enough and more" to spare.

They were proposing a four-hour work day — and this was long before computers and robotics!

The technocrats were viewed as political crackpots trying to subvert the North American way of life — which of course was true on both counts.

Had they developed a political philosophy consistent with their industrial concepts, no doubt the world would be a different, more leisurely, place today.



THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

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## *Unemployment was the goal*

# Profs see a world of leisure

TORONTO (CP) — High unemployment is here to stay and it's time we started making long-term plans for a world of leisure, professors say.

And, they add, Canadians should not be surprised by the current gloomy unemployment picture because it is nothing more than what we originally set out to create.

"Man invented machines so man would not have to work and we've succeeded to the point of one and a half million unemployed," said John Farina, a professor in the faculty of social work at Wilfrid Laurier University.

Farina and his colleagues say we are trying to cope with a post-industrial society on the basis of outdated values such as the work ethic.

He would like to see radical changes in the school system to prepare the next generation for the new world of leisure.

He would start by abolishing all vocational courses and replacing them with social education.

"We have to put less emphasis on teaching people to make a living and more on teaching people how to live.

"People who are doing nothing today have been unprepared to do anything but work.

"The changes will have to come but it's going to take about 200 years without a war."

Farina believes there would be no problem financing a world where most

people did not work because new technology would enable the economy to keep growing.

But new ways of redistributing money must be found.

Joseph Levy, a professor in the faculty of leisure studies at the University of Waterloo, says politicians are refusing to acknowledge that unemployment may stay high for many years.

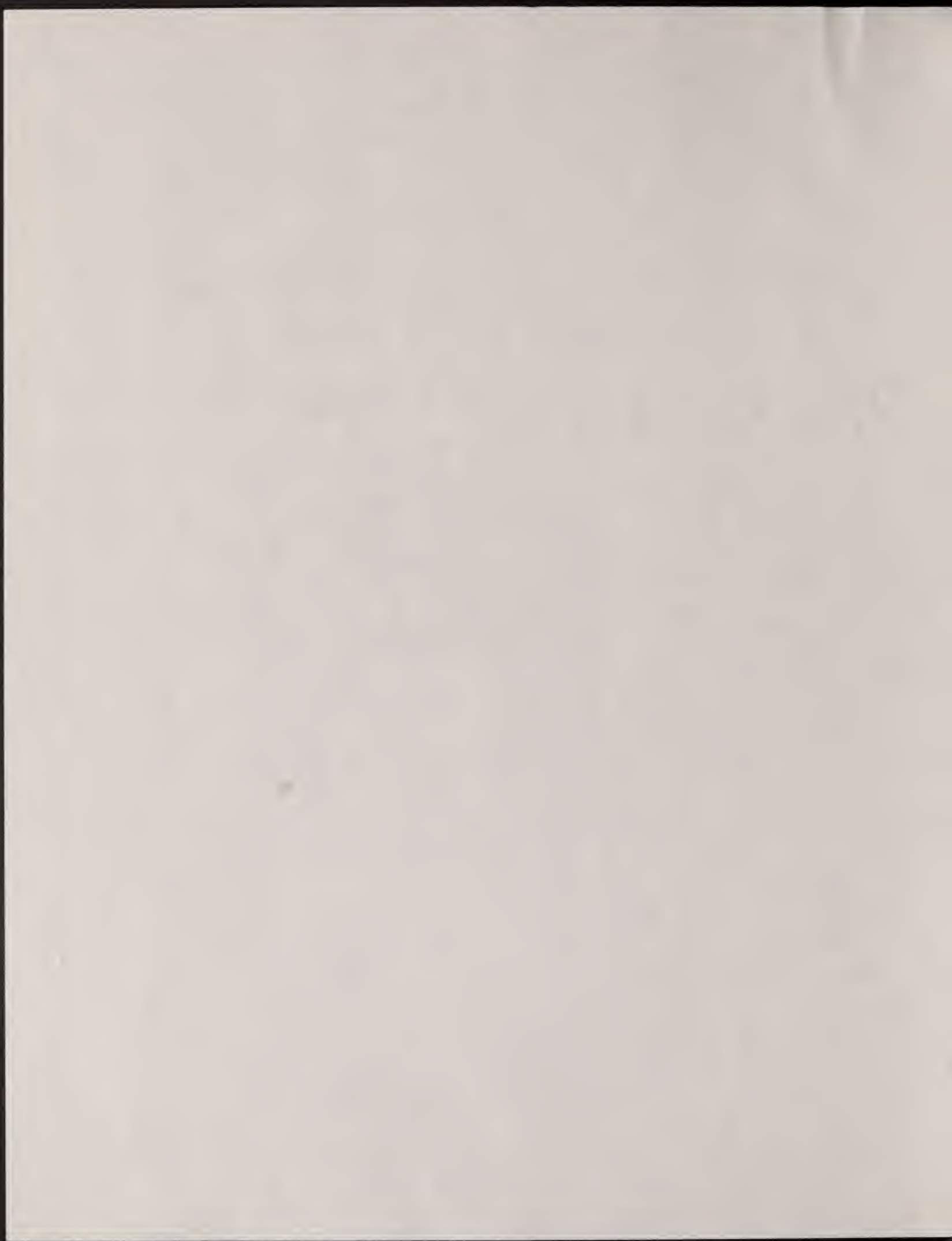
Bill Knott, leisure researcher for the Ontario government, admits that very

little time or money has gone into researching the needs of the new unemployed.

His department has sent out a bulletin requesting current research on the problem.

"But my guess is there hasn't been any done," he says.

Knott hopes to be able to come up with some success stories in Ontario that could be used in a how-to manual for re-educating the unemployed.





# Unemployment seen as 'success'

TORONTO (CP) — High unemployment is here to stay and it's time we started making long-term plans for a world of leisure, say experts on the subject.

And they add Canadians should not be surprised by the current gloomy unemployment picture because it is nothing more than what we originally set out to create.

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"But instead of cheering about it, we're in despair. To me that is sheer, raging idiocy."

Farina and his compatriots say we are trying to cope with a post-industrial society on the basis of outdated values such as the work ethic.

He would like to see radical changes in the school system to

prepare the next generation for the new world of leisure. He would start by abolishing all vocational courses and replacing them with social education.

"We have to put less emphasis on teaching people to make a living and more on teaching people how to live," he said. But he warned there is little hope for the present generation, which cannot cope with a life without work.

"People who are doing nothing today have been unprepared to do anything but work," he said. "The changes will have to come but it's going to take about 200 years without a war."

Farina feels there would be no problem financing a world where most people did not work because new technology would enable the economy to keep growing. The main difficulty, he said, would be to find better ways of distributing the money.

Joseph Levy, a professor in the

faculty of leisure studies at the University of Waterloo, says politicians are refusing to acknowledge that unemployment may stay high for many years.

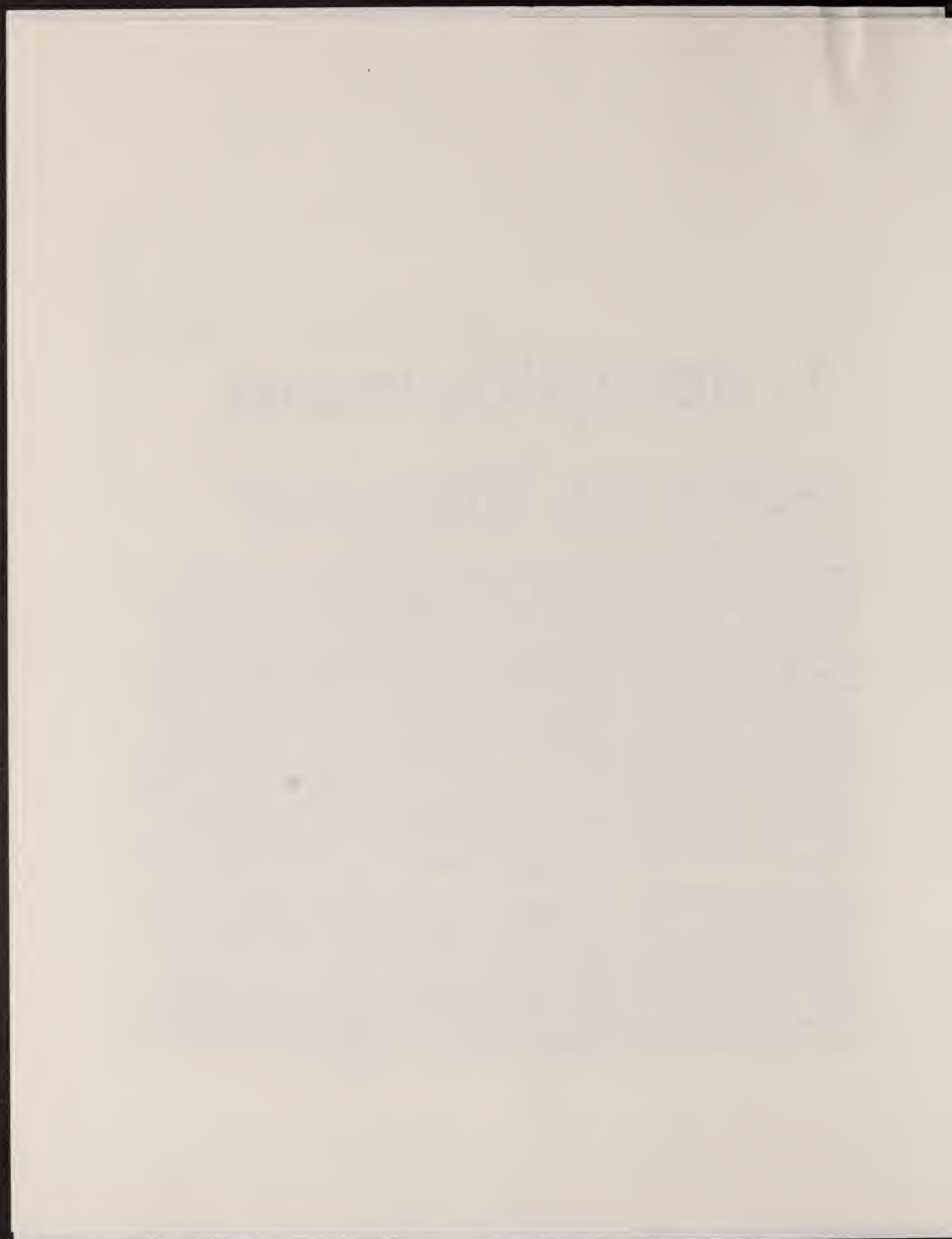
He says everybody just keeps hoping the problem will go away but somebody has got to tackle the issue or people will become depressed, bored and suicidal.

Bill Knott, leisure researcher for the Ontario government, admits very little time or money has gone into researching the needs of the new unemployed.

"We have had 35 years of uninterrupted growth without hard times until now," he said.

His department has sent out a bulletin requesting current research on the problem, "but my guess is there hasn't been any done."

Knott hopes to be able to come up with some success stories in Ontario that could be used in a how-to manual for re-educating the unemployed.



28 December 1982

Mr. Bill Knott,  
Leisure Researcher,  
Govt. of Ontario,  
Toronto, Ont.

Dear Mr. Knott:

We noted with interest the remarks ascribed to you in an article in the Edmonton Journal, issue of November 1st, 1982, (copy attached). You will note that the article stated that your "department has sent out a bulletin requesting current research on the problem".

Technocracy has been concerned with the problems of technological unemployment and the consequent opportunities for an abundant leisure life for nearly half a century. From its inception as a research and educational membership organization in April 1933 Technocracy has presented a technique of social operation to satisfy the requirements of North America's advanced technological development.

Should you not be aware of our literature we are pleased to attach the following:

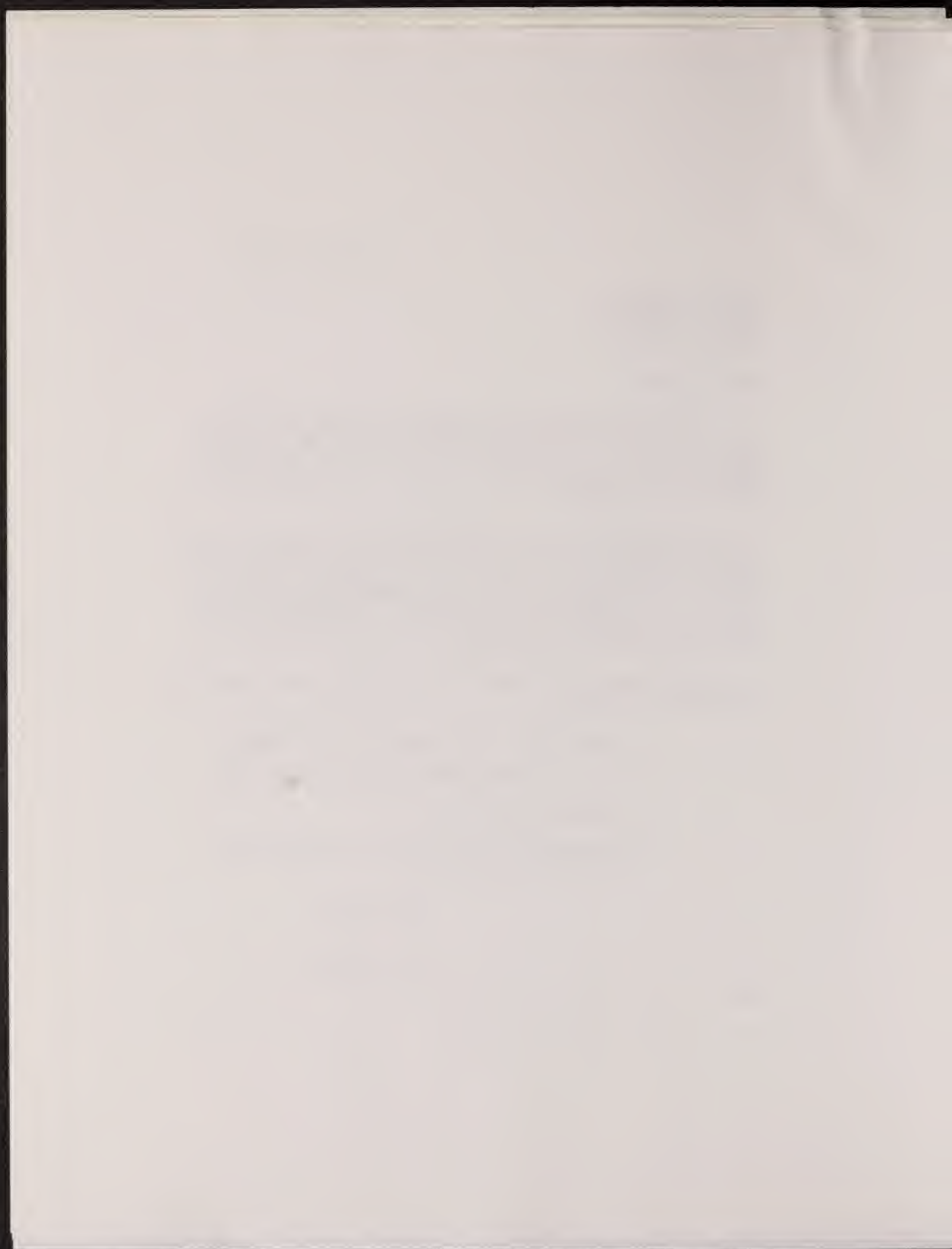
1. "Technocracy: Technological Social Design";
2. "The Culture of Abundance" by E. Merrill Root;
3. Technocracy Briefs (3);
4. Technocracy Digest, No. 263, Feb.Mar.Apr.1982.  
(See article pages 12-16).

Yours truly,

John Gregory

Enc.





28 December 1982

Dr. John Farina,  
Professor, Social Sciences,  
Wilfred Laurier University,  
75 University Ave. West,  
Waterloo, Ont.  
N2L 3C5

Dear Dr. Farina:

We have noted with great pleasure your article in the November 1st, 1982 issue of the Edmonton Journal and your interest in the subject of technological unemployment and the consequent opportunities for an abundant leisure life.

Technocracy has been concerned with these topics for nearly half a century and has designed a technique of social operation to satisfy the requirements of North America's advanced technological development.

Should you not be aware of our literature we are pleased to attach the following:

1. "Technocracy: Technological Social Design";
2. "The Culture of Abundance" by E. Merrill Root;
3. Technocracy Briefs (3);
4. Technocracy Digest, No. 263, Feb.Mar.Apr. 1982 -  
(See article pages 12 - 16.)

Yours truly,

John Gregory.

Enc.





28 December 1982

Dr. Joseph Levy,  
Prof. of Leisure Sciences,  
University of Waterloo,  
Waterloo, Ont.  
N2L 3G1

Dear Dr. Levy:

We have noted with great pleasure your article in the November 1st, 1982 issue of the Edmonton Journal and your interest in the subject of technological unemployment and the consequent opportunities for an abundant leisure life.

Technocracy has been concerned with these topics for nearly half a century and has designed a technique of social operation to satisfy the requirements of North America's advanced technological development.

Should you not be aware of our literature we are pleased to attach the following:

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(See article pages 12 - 16.).

Yours truly,

John Gregory.

Enc.



**"TECHNOCRACY  
PREPARES  
FOR  
SOCIAL  
CHANGE"**  
a lecture  
8:00 P.M.  
Tuesday, October 26  
92 Avenue Lounge  
North end of HUB Mall  
University of Alberta

# Edmonton Journal

## Classified

Inside

- Vital statistics
- Weather
- Bridge column
- Crosswords

Section

**E**

Friday, October 22, 1982

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**"TECHNOCRACY  
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CHANGE"**  
a lecture  
8:00 P.M.  
Tuesday, October 26  
92 Avenue Lounge  
North end of HUB Mall  
University of Alberta

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PATIENTS**  
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# Neighborhood Journal

EDITOR MARV ZIVITZ

## SOUTHWEST

Please call neighborhood editor Marv Zivitz at 420-1919 with information of news in your area. Deadline is noon Monday for publication Wednesday.



## Technocrats preach reform

By KEITH KRAUSE

Technocrat is a word with many negative connotations. But for some Edmonton residents, technocracy represents the path to economic well-being.

The 20 members of the Edmonton unit of Technocracy Inc. carry the banner of an ideology that stretches back to the Depression. Today, they spread their message from a small office in the HUB Mall on the University of Alberta campus.

"We live on a finite planet, yet we talk about continued expansion and growth," says organizer Jack Gregory. "To avoid the collapse that will come when we reach our limit, we must restructure the production and distribution systems of North America."

He advocates creating a self-contained "Technate of North America," in which all people would receive an equal share of goods produced. "We have accepted the fact that nobody here should starve, so let's be civilized and implement this principle properly."

Work would also be divided equally among all adults, "with no differentiation," said Mr. Gregory. Production would be co-ordinated by a hierarchy of technocrats, headed by a continental director, and each technocrat would be responsible for overseeing a particular task in society. This system would make politicians and financiers obsolete, he said.

Technocracy originated in 1919 with American engineer Howard Scott. Its heyday was during the 1930s, and since then members have been fighting to preserve the organization.

Technocracy would not, as some critics fear, result in a loss of freedom, Mr. Gregory contended. "If you have a guaranteed income from birth to death, you've got more freedom than if you have to kowtow to someone for a job."





# Edmonton Journal

A Southam Newspaper

Box 2421  
Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 2S6  
Telephone (403) 425-9120

Sept. 24-81

Mr. Malt Fryers,  
Technocracy, Inc.  
EDMONTON, Alberta.

Dear Mr. Fryers:

Thank you for your letter of August 19 which I found most interesting. I am, in fact, taking the material you enclosed along with me on the vacation I'm starting off on next Monday.

Naturally I have reservations about commenting on something which I have read about only very superficially in the past. However, it does occur to me that the basic principle of Technocracy -- that abundance must be distributed to all our citizens from birth to death -- requires a fundamental change in attitudes in our society about balances of power. The fact of the matter is that there are many, many people in those positions of power or scrambling to get there for whom the "distribution of abundance" is the very last thing they want to see. They will fight against it to the last ditch.

In other words, there are moral questions here that technological advances can't answer. I suspect this is the main reason why Technocracy -- which I heard discussed around my grandmother's table 50 years ago -- has made such comparatively weak inroads anywhere.

Sincerely,

*June Shepard*  
JUNE M. SHEPARD  
COLUMNIST



James L. Garrison

1840

# Edmonton Journal

## Letters to The Journal

### Losing game

*Unemployment — time bomb under Western society.* Page E3 of *The Journal* of May 16 is frightening. Granted, it deals with the unemployment of the youth of Europe, but we are facing the same problems here in "fat cat" North America.

It was heartening to see on Page G2 that Pete Brewster had brought Technocracy Inc. out of the closet, and it would be well for us to investigate the suggestion that there is an alternative to the grim future that appears to be ahead of us.

The often-used phrase "to create jobs" has a flimsy and ineffectual sound to it, mainly because it is, in the long run, a flimsy and ineffectual practice. Ours is an energy-intensive society, not a labor-intensive one. Until the industrial revolution took hold, the energy to support human life on this planet was 98 per cent human. Now 98 per cent of our energy is derived from the developments of the technological age and only two per cent of it comes from human effort.

It is obviously impossible to "create" jobs for everyone — including the housewives and teenagers who weren't even in the job market prior to World War II, except as domestic help (remember that?).

So, how are we to have the purchasing power for the ever-escalating cost of living, plus the plethora of consumer goods that are produced not by manpower but by machines?

The wealth of the North American continent is its resources, its manpower, and its technological knowledge, all of which are being "consumed" with such inequity, such waste and such profligacy that our land, our water, our air, and our human resources are being irrevocably destroyed, all in the pursuit of profits for the multinational corporations that are increasingly controlling the affairs of world government. We are playing a losing game.

V. A. Newcombe  
Edmonton

28 May 79

*Edmonton Jnl. 25 June 79*

### Technocracy

I wish to congratulate Pete Brewster, *Journal* business editor, on his articles on technocracy. It is refreshing to note there are some thinkers in the media who see beyond the trivia of everyday reporting.

Mr. Brewster has correctly assessed that the present price system, which evolved from the days of human toil and scarcity, is becoming increasingly incapable of distributing the abundance produced by today's highly developed technology and automation. Our political leaders still talk of reducing the unemployment rate by increasing our rate of growth through the introduction of ever greater automation to reduce labor costs.

Technocracy offers a design for the social operation of a high energy civilization.

R. Deacon  
Edmonton

### Technocracy

Recognition of technocracy's fundamental contributions to an understanding of our economic situation here in Canada and the United States is long overdue.

Pete Brewster's columns on technocracy, appearing in the Business section of *The Journal* (May 16 and 23), were a start in that direction.

There is widespread disenchantment nowadays with our political and business leadership. And no wonder. Problems are not solved. They are "jaw-boned" to the point of stupefaction or patched over, only to reappear worse than ever. So it is with inflation, unemployment, pollution, wastage of resources, the astronomical growth of debt, the energy crisis and so on.

There is also an implicit demand for new leadership in new directions.

Technocracy points out that the "price system" of operating the North American economy is hopelessly bankrupt, not only financially but, more importantly, in competent leadership and functional adaptability in this age of science and technology.

Technocracy proposes an economy geared to energy rather than money; an idea that makes more sense every day. Such a method of social operation would be administered, of necessity, by technically qualified personnel, not politicians or manipulators of prices and values, credit and debt.

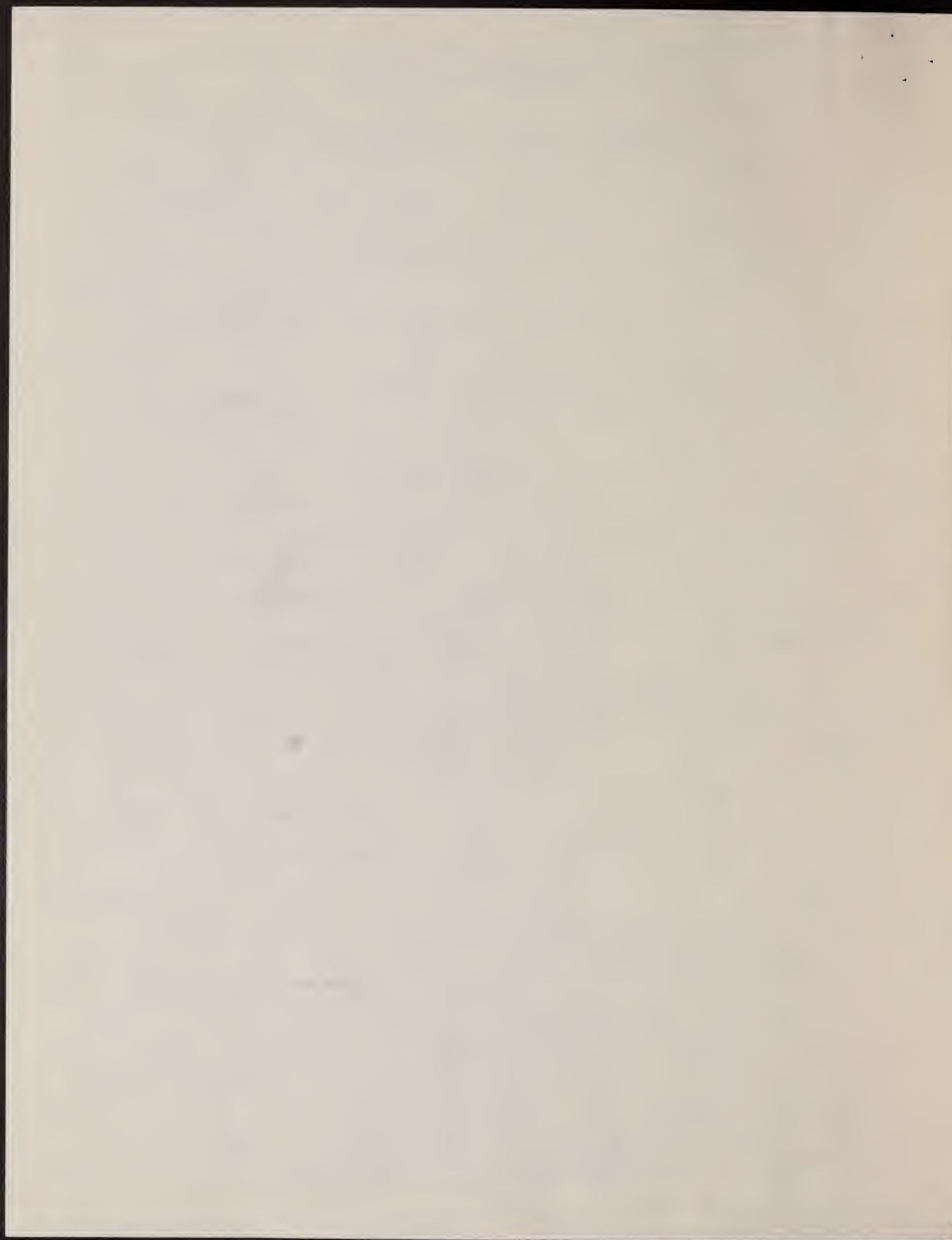
Money is a poor and failing measure of the consumer's rights. This is the basic issue of our times. It is urgent that it be fairly presented to the citizens of North America. The media have a great responsibility in this direction.

It is later than we think.

Walt Fryers  
Edmonton

EDMONTON JOURNAL  
14 AUG 79





11515 39 Ave.,  
Edmonton, Alta.  
T6J 0M5

9 Aug 79

Editor,  
Letters to the Editor,  
The Journal,  
Edmonton, Alta.

Sir:

Recognition of Technocracy's fundamental contributions to an understanding of our economic situation here in Canada and the ~~UNITED STATES~~ is long overdue. Pete Brewster's columns on Technocracy, appearing in the Business Section of the Journals of May 16th and 23rd, were a start in that direction.

There is widespread disenchantment, nowadays, with our political and business leadership. And no wonder! Problems are not solved. They are 'jaw-boned' to the point of stupefaction, or patched over, only to re-appear worse than ever. So it is with inflation, unemployment, pollution, wastage of resources, the astronomical growth of debt, the energy crisis, and so on.

There is also an implicit demand for new leadership in new directions. Technocracy points out that the 'PRICE SYSTEM' of operating the North American economy is hopelessly bankrupt, not only financially, but, more importantly, in competent leadership and functional adaptability in this age of science and technology.

Technocracy proposes an economy geared to energy rather than money; an idea that makes more sense every day. Such a method of social operation would, of necessity, be administered by technically qualified personnel, not politicians or manipulators of prices and values, credit and debt. Money is a poor and failing measure of the consumer's rights.

This is the basic issue of our times. It is urgent that it be fairly presented to the citizens of North America. The media have a great responsibility in this direction. It is later than we think!

Yours sincerely,

Walt Fryers.





# Pete Brewster



My column on Technocracy Inc. last week drew more than the usual amount of comment.

I suspect many who read it (assuming, of course, that it was read by many) felt it was a harmless bit of nostalgia and not really too relevant to today's problems. Nothing, in fact, could be further from the truth.

At the time of writing this column on Tuesday, we had yet to know the results of the federal election. But regardless of the outcome, based on past performance of all major parties concerned, does anyone seriously expect the policies advocated will solve our problems — no matter who has the power tonight?

At worst we will have a continuation of past performance; at best a mild tinkering which might, or might not, modestly improve the over-all situation. None of the parties are looking for new alternatives.

Now, most of us in the West are pretty well off, particularly here in Alberta. But even here, there is a significant portion of the population which is benefitting very little from — and in some cases has been harmed by — Alberta's boom of the seventies.

Central Canada has been in the economic doldrums for some years and the chronic woes of the Atlantic provinces need no recounting here.

Efforts to stimulate industry through such things as Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) programs have had little impact on the core problems. Even the massive intervention of government taxation and transfer payments has done little to help.

What statistics are available suggest that Canada's poor are, in fact, relatively less well off today than they were at the start of this decade. The issue has been obscured by the larger concerns about inflation, unemployment, resource shortages — either real or contrived — fierce international trade competition and the growing disparity between the industrialized and underdeveloped nations.

The rich, too, are less secure. Many companies no longer bear the name of their founders. That makes them and their families too easy a target for would-be kidnappers. A whole new insurance specialty has arisen, with what to do to avoid kidnapping advice available to the potential victim.

Courses in evasive driving are now offered. And firms have sprung up specializing in the armor-plating of vehicles.

Airplane travellers face the added hazard of terrorists with a mindless, nihilistic approach to life.

Crime statistics have been on the increase. All these bode ill for the rich.

And in many areas the spectre of another depression, at least as deep and as dark as that of the 1930s, is being raised.

The significance of Technocracy to the current scene is that it does offer an alternative approach to production and distribution, based on modification of existing institutional structures.

Nowhere in the world has an industrial society developed without the accompanying development of a market system. Whether it is individual or state capitalism has been quite irrelevant; it seemed you couldn't have one without the other.

But we really don't know if the interlock is that tight. Technocracy suggests it isn't, and that other options are open to us. We should explore that avenue in depth.

However, as originally presented, Technocracy appears to imply a form of political socialism which would be completely unacceptable to most North Americans. Nor, I suspect, would Technocracy's complete rejection of the market system be acceptable.

There is no real reason to be dogmatic about the political structure of a society. It need not be tied to the means of production. Nor is there any reason to get uptight over the method of accounting, whether it is money, wampum or energy certificates.

Obviously, we are not going to turn the clock back; but the need for some fresh, new approaches to development and a restoration of the economy to a less dominant role in society is in order.

It seems to me that this is a fertile area for research and development and one that would prove far more beneficial to society than any new industrial innovations. We really have nothing to lose.





# Pete Brewster



I was out for an after dinner walk on Monday and wandered through the Hub Mall, on the University of Alberta campus.

In one of the lounges, I spotted three fellows I've known for some time and dropped in for a chat. It turned out they are all members of Technocracy Inc., and were there for a public meeting. Unfortunately, they were competing with Pierre Trudeau and only three others besides myself stopped to listen.

Now, most of you have probably heard the term 'technocrat.' It tends to be used in a derogatory sense, and suggests some type of automated civil service bureaucrat. In fact, that's a long way from what Technocracy is all about and really does an injustice to the people and ideas involved.

Technocracy is a uniquely North American movement, which had its beginning in New York just after the First World War.

Technocracy Inc. was formed in 1933, a couple of years before I arrived on the scene and long before the majority of our present population was born. It flourished during the declining years of the depression, then went quietly into mothballs during and following the Second World War.

Today, only a few old timers are trying to spread the word. In Edmonton, they've opened an office in Hub, at the north end of the mall.

One of the basic tenets of Technocracy is that the market economy — what technocrats refer to as the price system — will eventually fail. They contend it is based on several fallacious assumptions and is not compatible with the real world over an extended period of time.

The price system, they argue, requires scarcity. If real scarcity does not exist in a particular commodity it must be induced artificially in order to 'create' a price on which a profit can be realized. (Oil and OPEC come readily to mind.)

Furthermore, they contend, the system will only continue to function adequately so long as it can expand. Since we face real life limitations, the system must eventually collapse when it has been puffed up beyond some unspecified ceiling through the creation of artificial wants.

Another facet of the real world ignored by the price system is the decreased need for human labor, thanks to technological developments and sharply improved productivity.

Only by creating unnecessary jobs can we distribute money, an inefficient way of portioning out the production of which our modern industrial systems are capable. In fact, they say, we have the capacity to produce all our real needs in abundance.

How that can be done is the nuts and bolts of Technocracy. Since I can't do it justice within the limitations of a column, I won't try. But give their office a call if you want details.

In my view, one of the reasons Technocracy ran into difficulties is that practically all of the leaders of the movement when it got rolling were engineers. And for some strange reason, engineers — no matter how brilliant they might be technically — seem to have difficulty getting across ideas simply. Howard Scott, the guru of Technocracy was no exception.

The only economist in the group — Thorstein Veblen — was dead by the time Technocracy Inc. was formed. A bitter, brilliant critic of the market system, Veblen's writing spanned a period from 1892 through the mid-1920s. Many of his works are classics.

He's been called the most creative mind American social thought has produced. I was appalled, therefore, to hear a 19-year-old economics student at the meeting confess that he'd never even heard of Veblen.

Nor had this youngster heard of Karl Polanyi, the Vienna-born economic historian who died in 1964. Polanyi, too, was a severe critic of the market system. His well-known friend, Peter Drucker, in anything I've read, hasn't even dealt with the problems Polanyi raises, let alone offered solutions.

Another 'old-timer' I'd like to mention is the British social reformer R.H. Tawney. He died in 1962. Most of his more critical work relating to the market economy dates from the 1920s.

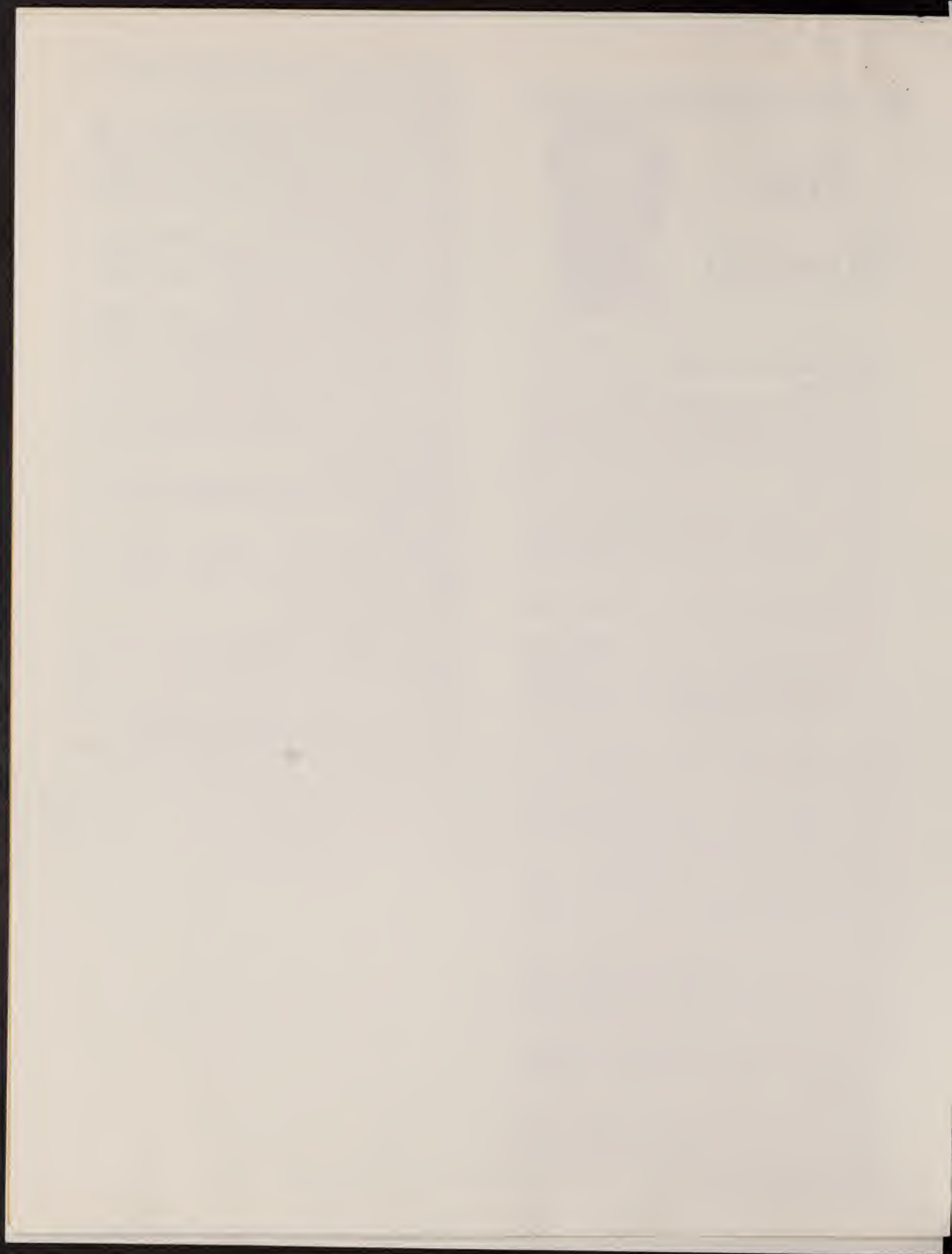
Another economic critic — though less of a heretic than the three mentioned above — is Dr. E.J. Mishan. His book, *The Costs of Economic Growth*, was written in 1967, to be followed two years later by *Twenty-One Popular Economic Fallacies*.

It is because of men like the above that I'm not a true believer in orthodox economics. Besides, all my formal training has been in philosophy and psychology so I have no real commitment to maintaining the market system inviolate.

The market works largely because enough people believe in it and are prepared to follow the rules to keep it working. That shouldn't blind us to its shortcomings.

And in that vein, a good dose of Technocracy wouldn't hurt anybody.





## Still waiting

The Mosaic Forums Ltd. (Alberta) brought to Edmonton recently such eminent speakers as novelist Leon Uris, scientist Paul Ehrlich (author of *The Population Bomb*), Herman Kahn, founder and director of the Hudson Institute, zoologist and geneticist David Suzuki, and psychologist Albert Ellis, well advertised beforehand by *The Journal* and other media.

However, these lectures were scheduled for the afternoons of May 5 and 6 and the forenoon of May 7 at the Convention Inn South for a fee of \$165, or \$180 with lunch, or individual sessions at \$40 each, effectively putting them beyond reach of many people, such as myself, who would be interested in hearing what these "future-watchers" have to say. I understand about 250 people were able to take advantage of the opportunity.

I counted on being able to read in *The Journal* and hear on the radio, subsequently, at least the gist of their messages but the pickings were slim indeed. By inquiring around I did learn that these illustrious visitors may be seen sometime in June on Capital Cable TV and that this will be advertised.

Between the First and Second World Wars, when there was a continent-wide ground swell of interest in Technocracy Inc., it was an easy matter to fill the Winnipeg Auditorium, the equivalent at the time of our Jubilee Auditorium, with people who wanted to hear of

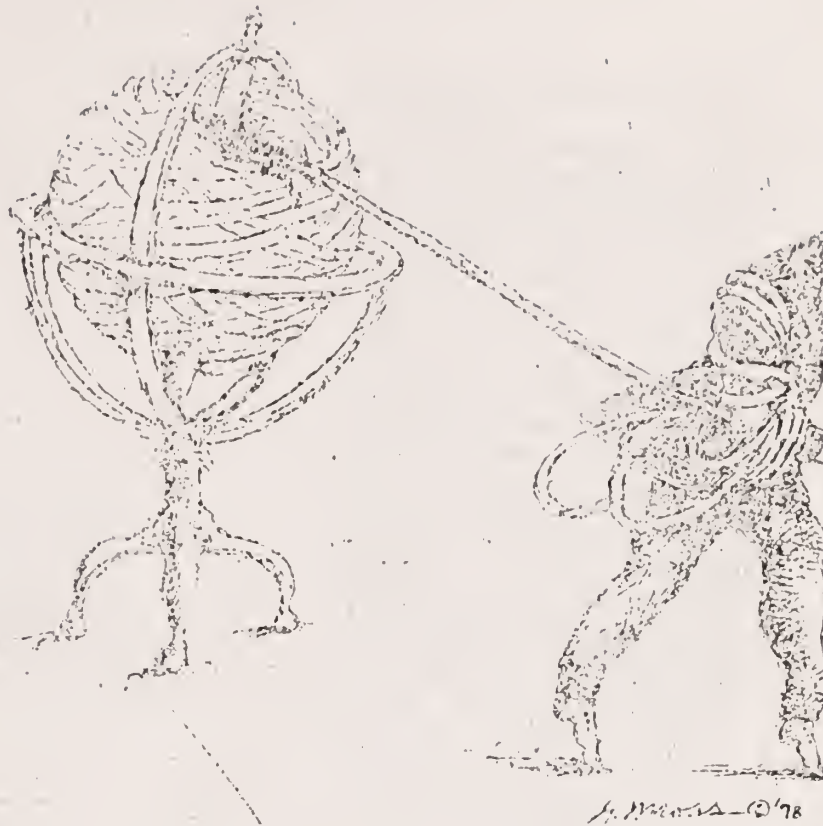
the design for the future of North America from Howard Scott, the chief among the engineers and scientists who conducted a survey of the continental resources and founded the organization for the purpose of research and education. Apparently it is futile in these affluent (?) times to expect people to turn out in any numbers to hear a speaker on whatever topic on any evening.

Technocracy Inc. is still waiting in the wings for the day when the people of North America awaken

to the realization that an alternative to our present socio-economic system is imperative. The future is here — are we ready for it?

Speakers for groups are available and information may be obtained from the office of Technocracy Inc. in the north end of the Hub Mall on the U of A campus. There are informal sessions on Tuesday evenings in the Rocking Chair Lounge of the mall. The telephone number is 432-0344.

C. Newcombe  
Edmonton



Edmonton Journal Sat. 24 May 80





## Smart people

Herman said it, in Unger's cartoon in *The Journal* the other day: "One day you'll realize that the people capable of running the country are too smart to get into politics."

The fact of the matter is that the government of this country is too complicated to be entrusted to politicians. What's the alternative? Functional control — with production and distribution of goods and services effected by energy account-

ing, rather than by the vagaries of the flighty dollar.

Away back about 1919, a group of engineers and scientists, among them such household names as Thorstein Veblen and M. King Hubbard, observed that, despite the First World War's drain on manpower, production did not decline, but actually increased, thanks to the industrial revolution having hit its stride.

This prompted them to conduct a survey (working from Columbia University) of the energy and all other resources of the North American continent as a geographical unit, and then to formulate a design to replace the "price system" which was becoming increasingly unstable in its obsolescence. Remember the 1929 Crash?

Out of the efforts of those engineers and scientists, who called themselves the Technical Alliance, came Technocracy Inc., which caught on like wildfire all over the U.S. and Canada. However, the Second World War saved the day for the vested interests, and, ever since then, wars and preparations for wars in whatever part of the world have kept the system going — or have they?

Technocracy Inc. is alive and well — even in Edmonton — and is in the HUB Mall on the University of Alberta campus. Perhaps its time has come.

V. A. Newcombe  
Edmonton

---

*Edmonton Journal*  
25 Jan 80.



Mr. Harry Midgley:

As a perceptive observer of the contemporary scene you will no doubt concede that we seem to be in a 'parlous' situation, facing what seem to be insoluble problems of inflation, unemployment, declining trade, galloping debt, labor unrest, etc.

So far, though, the official posture is 'business as usual' and 'don't rock the boat'. Fundamental change is indicated as the crisis deepens, but none is in sight. The politicians temporise, and improvise, and the economists tinker and talk, but nothing much changes. It looks as if we will run it into the ground rather than face the consequences of major social change.

Technocracy is an exception. Technocracy's proposals are fundamental enough to be commensurate with the problem.

The real problem in North America, can be said to be the capacity to produce an abundance but a social mechanism which must maintain a scarcity. We expend a huge amount of our energies and substance trying to sustain this contradiction; and a phenomenal number of words trying to justify and rationalize a system that has failed.

Its time, don't you think, that we faced up to the problem of distributing that abundance to all citizens, as proposed by Technocracy.

"Guaranteed income? Yes, people will still work."

Walt Fryers.

6 Sep 77





# Guaranteed income? —

## yes, people will still work

Although doctrinaire capitalists pose as being the implacable foes of doctrinaire Marxists, the truth is that they — consciously or unconsciously — embrace and promote some of the Marxists' main beliefs.

For instead of acting in such a way as to confound the propositions of the Marxists, they tend by their behavior to lend weight to Marx's proposition that economic factors largely govern what men think and do.

This is nowhere more evident than in the current debate in Canada as to whether or not we should introduce the system of the guaranteed income.

For the doctrinaire capitalists say that men will not work unless they are led or driven to it by the need to earn the means of life, or by the urge to acquire more and more material possessions, or to enjoy the privileges and pleasures that money can purchase. Exactly like the Bolsheviks they abominate, the capitalists are therefore asserting that men are moved mainly by economic forces.

So the doctrinaire capitalists say, "If we guarantee everybody a reasonable income, hardly anybody will feel the need or the inclination to work, and society will grind to a ruinous halt." Like the Bolsheviks they are great ones for incentives — especially the incentive of making it difficult for you to procure sustenance and shelter unless you join the conventional labor force.

But I say — in no wise implying that the notion is original — that man does not live by bread alone. And I have observed with my own eyes, over and over again, that men frequently work very hard and very well for other than economic reasons. In the armed forces and in civil life I have seen men stretch them-

selves to the limit, in order to prove true to their comrades or to a tradition, or in response to inspired leadership. I have seen poorly paid retainers give years of their lives in what was little short of serfdom or feudal service, out of loyalty and devotion to a family or a firm — or a cause. I have observed that leaders of politics, business, industry or professions — though they may receive high remuneration and may affect only to be working for monetary rewards — often are actually motivated by other than simply material incentives, and are really motivated by the desire to excel, or the desire to succeed, or the desire to be famous, or the desire to wield power, or by some other such desire or ambition that is not essentially economic in nature.

Indeed, I would go further and say that most of the best work of all kinds and in all occupations or activities is done for other than, or more than, strictly economic reasons.

Furthermore, my experience suggests, and there is extensive evidence to support the view, that most people prefer to be active and useful rather than to be idle and useless. I have observed — and so has nearly everybody else — that most people will find work with which to busy themselves, if they are left to themselves. Often they will voluntarily work harder than they will work under economic compulsion. Investigations aimed at uncovering lazy welfare layabouts have repeatedly confirmed that most people want to work and to be useful.

However, many people do not want to be busy or employed in the traditional labor force or in traditional "productive" work. There was a long period of history when society needed to insist on nearly everybody engaging in "productive" work in the old sense of the term "productive." But we long ago reached the stage in developed countries at which a minority of the population, using machines and power, could produce the basic econom-

ic requirements of society. So we can now afford to allow people to be active and useful and productive in a new way, without being chained to the traditional economic machine.

In other words, we can stop wasting the most precious — and the most productive, in both senses of the word — thing on earth, human life and human ability. We can release the human potential — unchain human beings from the economic treadmill: paying the dear price that should be paid to those who have to be persuaded to do work nobody wants to do.

A guaranteed income is the elementary step toward such a sensible system. It also happens that it is a far more economical way of protecting people from misfortune than are our existing systems of unemployment insurance, welfare, and so on. By having a guaranteed income, we could dispense at once with all the costly and oppressive bureaucracy necessary to run the conventional welfare schemes.

and necessary to reassure the public that abuse is being tracked down and rooted out — all of which costs far more than it ever saves the public purse. And a good income tax system ensures that, in effect, the benefit of the assured income will accrue to those who need it most.

So a guaranteed income makes sense in terms of thrifty administration of conventional social system. And it would prepare the way for a social system based on kinder, better and more fruitful use of the energies, talents and enthusiasms of human beings. Yet we are unlikely to move effectively to it, because even half-enlightened politicians like federal Health and Welfare Minister Marc Lalonde say it can't apply to you if you do not elect to engage in traditional work. Which means we are still in the clutches of the die-hard capitalists and the die-hard Marxists who are blind to the things of the spirit and the things of the imagination — the things that really matter.

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